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Bureau of Entomology  
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MEMORANDUM COVERING THE IMPORTATION OR INTERSTATE MOVEMENT OF  
LIVING INSECTS BY ANY AGENCY OF THE BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY

Introduction

The following statement is issued for the information and guidance of the personnel of the Bureau of Entomology with respect to importations or interstate movements of living insects necessary to the work of the Bureau, either directly or in relation to cooperative projects.

The importation and interstate transportation of living insects is subject to control under an Act approved March 3, 1905, commonly referred to as the "Insect Pest Act of 1905". The full title of this Act is "An Act to Prohibit the Importation or Interstate Transportation of Insect Pests, and the Use of the United States Mails for that Purpose."

The Act refers specifically to living insects notoriously injurious to cultivated crops and reads in part as follows:

"notoriously injurious to cultivated crops, including vegetables, field crops, bush fruits, orchard trees, forest trees, or shade trees; or the eggs, pupae, or larvae of any insect injurious as aforesaid."

To carry out the purpose of the Act it is obvious, however, that a broader interpretation is necessary and that provision be made for the determination of the status as to the injuriousness of the insect concerned. In the enforcement of the Act, therefore, it is proposed to require a permit for all importations or interstate movement of living insects including mites, ticks, etc.

Shipments of Living Insects to be Under Permit

For the reasons just indicated a permit is now required for all importations from foreign countries and for all interstate shipments of living insects. When such permits have been approved by the Chief of Bureau the officer in charge of the Division of Foreign Plant Quarantines will issue certificates which will accompany the shipments. While it is anticipated that requests for permits will very largely concern beneficial species, permits for non-beneficial species may be requested when clearly necessary for some scientific or other useful purpose and then only where adequate safeguards are available.



Procedure

The procedure in securing permits for the shipment of both beneficial and non-beneficial insects is as follows:

A. Permits for Importation or Interstate Transportation of Living Beneficial Insects.

Permits for the importation or interstate transportation of beneficial insects with or without their host insects will be granted on an activity basis, i.e. the host insect to be controlled. In requiring permits for any activity involving the transportation of living beneficial insects the following information should be submitted:

- (1) The purpose of the activity, including:
  - (a) Headquarters of the activity or project.
  - (b) Location of proposed investigations.
  - (c) Approximate date of starting work and anticipated duration.
  - (d) Facilities at headquarters for safe handling of materials.
- (2) Shipments, including:
  - (e) Method of transportation, i.e., water, air, rail, etc.
  - (f) Whether with or without host material, plant material, or in soil and other pertinent details.
  - (g) Safeguards provided to prevent the escape in transit of such injurious forms as may be present.
- (3) The names of responsible personnel at forwarding and receiving stations.
- (4) The approximate number of certificates required for the ensuing year.



Certificates issued for an activity will be given a short title based on the host insect. These activity certificates will be applicable both for importation of material and for its interstate distribution. Each parcel containing living insects sent through the mail or transported by common carrier under such activity shall bear a certificate. Certificates will not be required for interstate shipments carried personally by an approved agent of the Bureau.

To expedite the handling of shipments of living beneficial insects from foreign countries the Division of Foreign Plant Quarantines will notify inspectors at ports of entry through which shipments are likely to come. In the case of shipments requiring repacking or other special attention at the port of first arrival, a clear statement of the type of handling desired should be submitted to the Chief of Bureau.

When any very material changes are made in methods of transporting the insects for which a permit has been issued a memorandum describing the proposed modifications should be submitted for approval.

B. Permits for Transportation (Interstate) of Living Non-beneficial Insects.

Individual permits will be required for interstate shipments of all non-beneficial insects. Members of the Bureau of Entomology desiring to move non-beneficial insects interstate through the mails or by common carrier should request permits through the proper channels. Such request should include a fully informing statement giving (a) the purpose of such movement, (b) the benefits anticipated, (c) the method and manner of shipment, (d) the safeguards provided to prevent escape in transit and on arrival at destination, (e) range and economic importance of the species, (f) the approximate number of parcels, and (g) such other facts as they deem pertinent.

Permits will not be required for interstate movement of living insects carried by authorized agents of the Bureau in connection with their official work when such movement is within the general region of the laboratory where the investigations are being carried on. This does not, however, give authorization for the importation of living non-beneficial insects to points outside of their normal distribution or for the transportation between laboratory centers. It is intended to make provision for the conduct of investigations where the work carried on in the laboratory covers two or more states.



Should it be necessary in connection with the investigation of beneficial insects, for which an activity permit has been issued, to transport interstate living specimens of the host species, such host insects may be shipped interstate under the activity certificate. However, in event such shipment should take the non-beneficial host insect into a locality outside of its known distribution a special permit will be required and should be requested.

Reports on the Transportation of Living Insects Required

Laboratories or offices of the Bureau of Entomology importing living insects or moving them interstate by mail, common carrier or otherwise shall report all such movements to the Chief of Bureau. Where the office or laboratory is concerned with the movement of living insects under more than one activity and /or species of non-beneficial insect, the following statements should be prepared: (1) a consecutive list of all shipments made during the month from the laboratory, including those not requiring certificates and (2) a consecutive list of all shipments made under each activity, including those not requiring certificates. When an office or laboratory is concerned with only one activity a single statement will suffice. All statements should clearly show the activity, i.e., non-beneficial insect involved, and the origin and destination of each parcel. Reports of importations from foreign countries shall be made by the receiving office.

Foreign Mail Shipments

Attention is called to Article 45, paragraph C of the Universal Postal Union, Convention of London, June 29, 1929, which prohibits the sending by mail from one country to another, of any living insects with the exception of honeybees and silk-worms. Shipments of beneficial insects have on occasions been forwarded by mail from abroad in past years. Besides being in violation of the regulations adopted at the aforesaid convention this practice presents the possibility of delay or refusal to accept the parcel and should be discontinued. An effort is being made to have the international postal regulations amended to permit the use of the mails for shipments of beneficial insects to the United States when a certificate is attached to the package and the package is consigned to an office, or laboratory of the United States Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Entomology, or to an authorized collaborator thereof.



Shipments into California

In 1931 the responsible institutions in California and the Bureaus of Plant Quarantine and Entomology entered into a special agreement regarding shipments of living beneficial insects into California. Movement of living beneficial insects into that State will be considered as provided for under this agreement.

Lee A. Strong  
Chief of Bureau.

